



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4909

April 25, 2002

Lt. General Robert B. Flowers
Commander
United States Army Corps of Engineers
441 G Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20314-1000

Via Fax: (202) 761-4463

Dear Lt. General Flowers:

We were recently made aware of a proposal by the Army Corps of Engineers to create a "danger zone" in Lake Michigan for exercises by the Wisconsin Air National Guard and the U.S. Air Force. This proposal could have a dramatic impact on commercial fishing and recreational boating in Lake.

The "danger zone" extends from Port Washington to Manitowoc, along a line that runs about six miles east of Sheboygan, 10 miles east of Port Washington and seven miles east of Manitowoc. From that line, the zone extends to about the middle of the lake, forming a large rectangle. Implementing this zone could negatively affect the commercial fishing industry because the proposed zone overlies the southern chub, whitefish and smelt trawling zones. In addition, the proposal goes further by barring commercial fishing vessels from dropping anchor, or slowing down to drop nets, anywhere in the area "at any time." This is especially worrisome because commercial anglers are limited by state regulations to certain areas.

Besides being devastating to commercial fishing and recreational boaters, we have strong objections on how this proposal has been vetted. The Army Corps of Engineers issued its plans for this bombing range in the *Federal Register*, but failed to notify other parties directly, including us. Furthermore, there is considerable confusion between the relevant agencies as to the origination and need for the proposal. This is a very important matter and deserves a full public review before its implementation.

We hope you will thoroughly review our inquiries regarding this proposal and would also like a copy of the Environment Assessment regarding this recent proposal. We appreciate your prompt attention to this issue affecting our districts and look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, JR.,
Member of Congress

THOMAS E. PETRI
Member of Congress

Cc: The Honorable James G. Roche, Secretary of the United States Air Force
Major General James G. Blaney, Wisconsin National Guard and Air National Guard